

Curing the “over-cautious” shank



The most common reasons for the shank are usually said to be lack of balance, swinging too much from the inside, etc. However, I often find the player is just being too cautious. Weekend golfers don't practice much, and tend to lack faith in their abilities. They can get into the habit of stabbing at the ball, and don't "go after" the shot as they should. In the "over-cautious" shank, the right hand doesn't accelerate in the hitting area and at impact, the left hand is still ahead. The heel of the club leads into the ball and the hit is on the hosel. I tell the pupil to imagine two racing cars going round a corner. Obviously, the racer on the outside has to go faster than the man on the inside—

just to maintain the same relative position. Also, if he merely travels at the same speed as the inside man, he will have fallen behind when they come out of the corner. This is why the right hand, which is on the outside track, must accelerate in the hitting area so that it reaches the ball at the same time as the left, thus ensuring square contact. The best way I've found to make the pupil speed up his right hand is to tell him to think of making a *full, free follow-through*, relative to the length of the shot: Full shot, full followthrough; three-quarter shot, three-quarter followthrough, and so on with half- and quarter-shots. The "over-cautious" shank can then be cured in short order.

